

Mistress
ALICE JOCELYN
Her Letters





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MISTRESS
ALICE JOC-
ELYN Her
Letters

*In the Which be set Forth an
English MAYDE's Voyage to
the PROVINCE of Maine and
what did Befall her There-
after*

Endeavoured by
C. EMMA CHENEY

THE BLUE SKY PRESS
C H I C A G O

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TO ALL THE DWELLERS AT BLACK
POINT, AND IN PECULIAR, MY HUS-
BAND.

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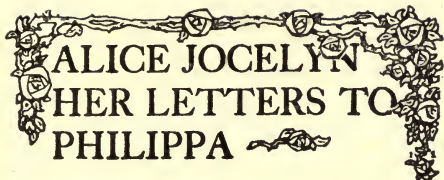
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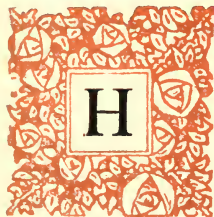
Letter the First

*BLACK POINT,
In the Province of Maine,
The Twentieth day of August,
Anno Domini, 1642.*



ALICE JOCELYN HER LETTERS TO PHILIPPA

HONOURED SISTER PHILIPPA:—



After my duty and my Uncle's presented to yourself these will inform you of our present health.

Hither came I this day se'nnight, devoid of mishap. When we did twyne down the Massachusetts Bay and casting anchor lay before Boston Town, the dear felicity of sighting land did set open the very flood-gates of mine eyes.

sold nor traded for, never. On a hill-top moreover, there's set up a tall gallows whereon a beacon's lit for to warn the town of danger. The people, they're a likely sort, pretty steady and satisfied with themselves, and mighty proud of their village also.

For the space of four and twenty hours, I tarried under Mr. Edward Tyng, his roof, being full hospitably entreated the while. This is an amiable gentleman of substance which hath influence in them parts. His dwelling's wondrous stout, as forsooth need is, for it sits on the shore hurtled by storms. Here moreover, do stand his brew and warehouses. There's a fine sun-dial in his garden. His pretty wife, she's a buxom lady and a mer-

ry. Mistress Tyng hath a spinet.

'Twas the tenth day of August when I took ship for Black Point. We fell down to Noddle's Island, proceeding thence straightway. "Now," thinks I, "shall I behold a fair countryside," (for we was to sail coastwise) but nothing saw I, save rock and dingle, with some few scattering huts. 'Tis no mean voyage neither,—scarce less than one hundred and fifty mile. The wind being for the most part fair, we was fetched with speed and safeness, short of three days. Uncle Henry Jocelyn, he descried our sail, and coming to the water's edge to receive us, had me forthwith to his own abode, namely, the house of Captain Thomas Cammock. Mistress Margaret, his lady, did

give me welcome, kissing my cheek lustily withal.

This "Point" is a brave place and a sightly, but wherefore they call it "Black," know I not, save perchance for the forest so thick and darkling. Touching this residence itself, I've seen a grander often, and a comfortabler. 'Tis situate on a jutting promontory commonly named the "Ferry Rocks." At its foot the ocean beats constant. Thickets of wild shrub and vine do abound creeping to the very doorstone, and mighty pretty to behold. Moreover here do thrive divers savoury fruits and rare posies, without so much as the pruning. On the heels of my arrivage, fell a smart storm of rain with wind and surpassing loud thunder

dreadful to hear.

Uncle Henry he dwells under this roof alway, and whiles he did tarry in America, Uncle John Jocelyn likewise; and now, sooth to say, here be I, also. Verily this is a hospitable country!

The name of this Province aforetime was "New Somersetshire," but since two year back it hath been christened "Maine," some says in honour of Queen Maria Henrietta, her French province called "La Meyne." The first General Court of the Province, it was holden in June two year agoe, Uncle Henry being one of the Counsellors. 'Twas then came the new Governor, Mr. Thomas Gorges, Esq., nephew to Sir Ferdinando, the first to

rule over the Province. He is a strip-ling but full comely. 'Tis hoped that he may make up in wisdom what he lacks in years.

On my coming hither Captain Cammock, he was off to Richman's Island but hath now returned. That noble blood flows in his veins, 'tis easy believed. There's a pretty tale abroad that his mother, the daughter of the Earl of Warwick, on opposition to the marriage, she did run away with Sir Thomas Cammock, the father of Captain Cammock. Being pursued they came to a river where 'twas thought the lady's courage would fail, but she nothing daunted, cries, "Nay, I will live and die with my true-love!" and over rode they, a-dreading naught and

did swim safe to the further bank.

Captain Cammock he's a man of two natures, 'tis manifest. With his fellows he's masterful, a-lording it over them. His tenants serves him with willing minds. Not a man nor a mayde but would die for him, yet he winks not at slackness, nor won't be cheated. He stands high in the Province, and could be chiefest amongst them had he but the will, which he wants. All in all, gentler household saw I never. With his lady Captain Cammock is exemplary kind and too indulgent, some says. He lacks good looks.

My willing heart would fain gossip further, but my quill quacketh in protest and my unpracticed hand do refuse further duty. These be writ with

mighty patience and will be conveyed to you by a trusty messenger. They leave me not in heavyness, albeit I'd freely follow whither they do go.

Commend my deference to my honoured aunt Elizabeth, and on thine own head, a benediction! Adieu.

Your dutyful Sister,

ALICE JOCELYN.

Letter the Second

*BLACK POINT,
In the Province of Maine,
The Thirtieth day of December,
Anno Domini, 1643.*

DEAR HEART:—

My reluctant pen must indite of a sad matter. Pray Sister, shed a pitying tear for them that mourn!

Near the ending of the year last past, 'twas clear that Captain Cammock, he was a prey to the wasting sickness. True, he wasn't bed-ridden nor wouldn't own to pain, but his ailing was pathetical to behold, spite of his brave demeanor. Mistress Margaret, she used her endeavour for to heal him, but the physic wrought not kindly and he would none of it, albeit 'twas but a simple Essence uncompounded. Seeing that he in no wise recovered but contrary grew the worse, come the Fall of the year, he set out for the West

Indies for the betterment of his condition. I mind me well the white and tearful face of his lady at the parting. Spirited enough I'll warrant you in ordinary, now she was all humbleness, nor recked she that the maids took note of her grieving. The Captain, he didn't relish the lone voyage to foreign parts neither, yet he sailed away to the Barbadoes on the five and twentieth day of September last past, and as Heaven willed, he did die pretty soon after his arrivage.

When the news did come, all was sorrow where late was joyousness. It doth comfort Mistress Margaret not a whit, nor yet Uncle Henry, that Captain Cammock, his last will and testament doth devise all his lands and chat-

tels to them twain. Mistress Margaret, she would liefer have her dear lord alive than her dower or yet his whole estate in fee, and Uncle Henry has a plenty at this present. After the demise of the lady herself, "the well-beloved friend," (so Captain Cammock styles Uncle Henry) he shall be inheritor sole.

Divers gentlemen do repair hither to give condolence to Mistress Margaret who goes a-sorrowing the live-long day. Me, she craves by her side constant, so close indeed, that some protest envy of her privilege. Yestern-even, Mr. Nicholas Shapleigh, he of Pemaquid, did ask if I wasn't nevermore to enjoy a solitary hour, professing to miss my company. But cries I,

“O, for shame, Sir! to desire such ill treatment of the widow in her desolate situation!” I bade him enliven Uncle Henry with a game of draughts, instead, sith he is scarce less gloomy than the lady, herself.

Christmas in this young world, was like to break my heart. Of dutiful honour to the late Master of the house, I thought not of decking with greens, but Mistress Margaret, (extreme tender toward my lonesomeness,) she did propose it full willingly. 'Twas indeed a homesick time with me at best, so Mr. Shapleigh, fell to inspiriting me as we twyned the wreaths together. Mr. Nicholas Edgcombe and Roger Deering, they came also.

Friends, have I few, but them be

choice. I would that Mistress Edward Tyng did dwell near by or that Mistress Deering would suffer Elizabeth to tarry here a little space. One there is, Christopher Page by name, which abides solitary on "Stratton's Island" in the offing, that is made free of this house. Mistress Cammock doth commiserate him, sith 'tis said comrades none has he, save dumb beasts. When I would show him some civility he essays to treat me like a child which I am not, by no means. He is old — two score at the very least, — but he needn't make free with my name. And he can't pacify my dignity with West Indian sweetmeats, neither. Why, the worshipful young Governor, he calls me "madam," returning my hum-

ble curtsy with a gracious bow.

But amongst them all — gentle and simple, — none is so like to be troublesome to mayde's peace of mind, as Mr. Nicholas Shapleigh aforesaid. Tall and straight, of noble build, he hath the eye of an eagle and the skin of a pippin. His locks be long and clustering, his beard the cut of a cavalier. Moreover, he's a great body in these parts, and hath a hand in affairs of the Province. If I seem bold-faced thus to confess myself, charge it to the fact that you have the key to my heart to go out and in without let. But I refrain further lest you dub me frivolous and silly, given to choose the society of the sterner sex, which on reflecting I trust you will credit me with not do-

ing.

'Tis no affectation to affirm that no maid of quality doth dwell here, save only me. You'll say I shall be spoiled with flattery. Nay, sister, Mistress Cammock, she hath her eye on me constant. Why, scarce a week passes but Uncle Henry craves my company to Saco, vowing that his pillion will carry me that six mile without a pound of over-weight. But Mistress Margaret, she frowns, bidding me sit at my sampler or 'broidery frame, or perchance lend assistance in household matters. A thrifty housewife is Mistress Cammock and mighty diligent. No deals be scoured so white as hers. No pewter shines brighter. As for the floors, you would swear they was

fresh sanded every hour of the glass. The serving men and maydes, they fear even while they do honour her.

Strange things there be in this place. A mile or more to northward, so 'tis claimed, a spring doth gush out of the earth fit for the chemist, his use, and for the healing of divers diseases withal. It coats iron of a silver colour, moreover. Caves be many where wild beasts do lie in hiding, and in the ground burrows a serpent — venomous and fearsome, with a rattle-box on the tip of his tail.

Goodman Boaden, that keeps the Spurwink ferry, he did relate a pretty adventure of Uncle John Jocelyn playing woodsman. Upon a tree, as he was a-walking in the forest once upon a

time, did he espy a rare big fruit, the like whereof he knew not. "Of the size of a woman's bonnet," (thus Uncle John) and of a fair wood hue, scaled all over of the similitude of a pine-apple. Straightway sought he to pluck and eat as did our ancient fore-mother of like curiosity. Nor better fortune had he. Scarce did he touch the monster, when out from its inward parts come forth myriads of wasps to sting him lustily and with diligence. Poor Uncle John! 'Twas a big price to pay to philosophy. Yet wiser than he, have been caught a-nodding, I suppose.

The Salvages be curious creatures. The women call they "Squaws." They're less ferocious than the males. Skin copper-colored, cheek-bones

high, hair black and straight, teeth small and white as milk till the poor creatures they be tooth-shaken with age. Both sexes tricks out in bravery and seems little more than infants, mighty pleased with beads and toys. I hear 't isn't safe to anger them or deceive, much less to trust them. One young Indian serving-girl do abide in this house.

Wishing you happiness in the coming new year, Philippa, spite of the dangers that do beset the realm, I remain

Your beholden sister,
ALICE JOCELYN.

Letter the Third

BLACK POINT,

In the Province of Maine,

The Twentieth day of March,

Anno Domini, 1644.

ESTEEMED SISTER:—

After my salutation, briefly thus. Here be wonderful news. I'm yet of two mindes whether to be sad or glad. Whiles Mistress Cammock, her weeds was scarce out of the crease, 'twas whispered that the widow herself wouldn't be averse to alleviating her loneliness by graciously accepting Uncle Henry as successor to her late lord. True, you couldn't fail to note that Uncle Henry, his attitude was most pityful toward the bereaved consort of his "well-beloved friend," nor that his ministrations went far to console her sorrow. But that the issue was so nigh to hand, 'twas no little surprising. Truth to tell, come Shrove Tuesday, in the pres-

ence of the household and some choice guests, the twain was made one, the Rev. Robert Jordan, from Spurwink, making the journey express for to tie the knot by the Service Book. The weather was bitter bad, but well was the parson rewarded for his trouble, I'll warrant, since Uncle Henry did bestow a purse of gold florins in his hand speedily after the bride was kissed.

Moreover the supper wasn't no small matter, neither, and the like I doubt had the dominie not tasted in these parts. There was stuffed eels, clams, trouts, wheaten-loaves, potatoes (scarce and exceeding dear), water-fowls, wild-turkeys, boiled venison and hog-meat. For sweets — presarves

of quince and damsons, marmalet of pippins, figs and oranges (from the Indies), walnuts and chestnuts eat with the Canary or mead. Besides, pom-pion-pies (a Puritan rarity) and good choculotte. Aqua vitae wasn't drunk. 'Twas a royal banquet and full toothsome. The board-cloth was of the finest Hollands, the napery wrought about, and some, laced. The silver standing salt-cellar was an heirloom, and a finer saw you never. I sat above it. The big pewter tankard set before Uncle Henry, that did shine marvelous bright. Several bone and some silver spoons there be, likewise. Mr. John Winter of Richman's Island, he did brag aside, to me, that he hath sundry vessels of tin, such as we wot not

of. I marvelled.

Of guests came many. Mr. Alexander Shapleigh and hisson Mr. Nicholas, and Mr. Nicholas Edgecombe, and of the neighbour folk, a goodly company. The salutations concluded, Uncle Henry, he conducts his lady to the head of the board, full gallantly, and a noble pair they was. Mistress Margaret, she wore a sad-coloured brocade gown, her pointed stomacher 'broidered with pearls, great sleeves slashed with white, petticoat of white satin and wondrous glistering. Her coif most handsome. The lace in ruff and sleeves, the rarest. It pitied me to see the string of pearls at her white throat. Methought 'twould stifle her, for 'twas the gift of her first spouse, and wore at

his wedding.

As to the bridegroom, none couldn't be genteeler. What with coat of fine red cloth, velvet breeches of puce-colour, broidered waistcoat bound with green, silken hose and pointed slippers, nothing was left for to desire. His flowing locks dressed with pomade, was flecked with grey. Mr. Shapleigh he swore he hadn't never seen a spectacle so fair as them twain. He danced with me often, did Mr. Shapleigh. I did wear my calimanco frock and Granny's golden beads.

A sorry spectacle was poor Master Christopher Page, in the reel. Like as not he never essayed the figure before nor perchance none other, such a bashful mien wore he. I smiled so

agreeable that I paid the penalty of giving him my hand in a dance. But 'twas when that Antient Islander did sing full lustily: "*O, What a plague is Love, I cannot bear it,*" that we did make merry. The voice of a clarion has he, the which he wants not the skill to magnify.

A cheerful air hath this house since the wedding. 'Tis here, come night, that the gentlemen do assemble for to sip mulled wine, spiced and tasty, or to drink deep draughts of warm ale, feasting on carroway comfits, a-discoursing on the politics which do afflict this Province. The young folk — such as me, — vastly prefer we nuts and cider betwixt our games of forfeits.

'Tis a big room, this kitchen. On

the right hand is a vast chimney, on the left, a dresser stored with ware and pewter. In the corner, a cupboard. Other furnishings be an oaken chest, a settle, a scrutoire, sundry high-back chairs, and the family-board ever ready and never too strait for another guest. Great logs do blaze in the chimney, cheerful to behold and none too warm for these nipping winter nights. Candles of bay-wax there be, fragrant and fair. By day the sun strives to enter through window-panes of waxen paper. Little need have we for arms or bannerets, for deer's antlers with Uncle Henry's fowling-piece and powder-horn adorns the walls. Strings of red peppers, dried apples, and comely quarter-moons of yellow pompions do de-

pend from the rafters. On the mantel-piece ever sits the tinder-box with flint and steel, ready for instant use.

Mistress Margaret, my now aunt, she doth salute you, and our gracious Aunt Elizabeth. God give you health!

Your obedient and loving servant,

ALICE JOCELYN.

P. S. We're sore distress by whisperings of war at home. Is't then a thing to fear?

A. J.

Letter the Fourth

*BLACK POINT,
The fifteenth day of September,
Anno Domini, 1644.*

RESPECTED SISTER:—

After my duty to my honoured aunt, and faithful devotion to yourself, these will bear news of our health.

Your late epistle hath brought anxious tidings. Loth was I to credit the worsting of Prince Rupert at Marston Moor. What will that advantage to Parliament? And pray in Heaven's name, what of the King? Is it that his person be in jeopardy? Can naught avail to satisfy the quarrel save bloodshed?

Scarce durst I broach these things hereabouts. Uncle Henry he crieth "Shame!" when one imputeth ill to the King, and Mr. Edgecombe, he is wroth at my saying I would fain be at

one with them that have the rule over me. Mr. Shapleigh is stout to maintain a woman's right to her own minde, and Aunt Margaret is of different opinion, albeit I wot she needeth no prop whereon to rest her conclusions. Verily it do go hard to keep the peace 'mongst contrary minded folk!

Touching this town, it groweth apace. Why, we could count half a score of families within the borders of Black Point, even now. Likewise, a brisk trade in fishes is afoot. The drying stages, they be ever laden, and the procedure itself, is well worth trouble to witness. 'Tis ever the same order,—catching, curing, drying, packing, shipping. Indians and niggers do skill in the business, but both be monstrous

lazy, unwatched.

Somewhile ago 'twas agreed for to remove from the "Ferry Rocks" to a more convenienter dwelling. Hither came we, master and mistress, man and mayde, as also sundry beasts and cattle, — 'tis now better than three months back. 'Tis nobly situate, this habitation. Conceive a pretty peninsula of no great size, begirt by a fair bay which doth open its arms to the sea only on its southernmost quarter. Across the bay, among the trees, sits the settlement of Blue Point, and behind that, the mountains. This residence itself, stable and commodious, doth overlook a pretty cove where the water laps in with soft soughing by night and by day. 'Tis not nigh so bluff nor so boisterous

as the Ferry Rocks, but comfortabler, by odds. The ferry's a good two mile distant. This doth plague a young gentleman which often makes the journey for the sake of my company.

Sooth to say, Philippa, cheat myself if I would, I dursten't deny no longer that my silly heart beats faster at the sound of his name. Moreover I'm persuaded that I occupy no mean place in his affections neither. Love,—the sly fellow!— he hath outwitted a timor-some mayde, and ere I was aware had unlocked the portals of my heart to the besieger. In truth, Philippa, Mr. Nicholas Shapleigh, he's to be my husband soon or late. The time's not agreed on, we sharing the full measure of our content unabashed by prying

eyes. Mr. Shapleigh 'll broach his suit to Uncle Henry on occasion, but with Aunt Margaret I must make mine own terms. 'Tis thought she would alway keep me single, so Mr. Shapleigh, he fails of heart to gainsay her. (Maybe he wants the courage, too.) Moreover Mr. Edgecombe hath a snug place in the esteem of both my guardians, and — don't charge me with vanity! — 'tis understood he would come a-courting were he but winked at. Faith! an' there wasn't one among 'em all I'd liefer have than him till Nicholas Shapleigh, he and I twyned the Christmas greens together two years ago. Since that day the world hasn't held but one man for me. Don't breathe this idle gossip at this present, to our

honoured Aunt. 'Tis full enough for you to deem me silly, mayhap unseemly. Wish me joy instead, of the dear felicity which has come to my lot.

Are you an-hungered oftentimes even as I, for sight of your sister? Then Philippa, you'll compassionate one who doth sorely desire news of thee.

Your true and happy friend,

ALICE JOCELYN.

Letter the Fifth

BLACK POINT,

The New Year Day, 1645.

AMIALE SISTER:—

How indulgent is God to regard our little lives with so great patience! In joy are we sufficient unto ourselves, but let sorrow come a-nigh then cry we to have it remitted despite our unworthyness. In the opening of the year these reflections do overwhelm me remembering in my now dependence, the New Year gone and how little thought I then, on my Heavenly Father, his goodness. At my last writing I did reckon on sending you merry tidings speedily, but now alas! there'll never be none to tell.

After great searchings of heart and divers obstacles overcome, 'twas finally agreed 'twixt Uncle Henry and my

Aunt, to grant my hand in marriage to Mr. Shapleigh, though they twain would fain marry me to t'other gentleman, to wit, Mr. Edgecombe. Him, like I rarely, and do honour, albeit he isn't no scholar, nor can't write so much as "*Nicholas Edgecombe, Esq.*," — to save his teeth. A man of parts is he, and of the noble family of Mount Edgecombe, and worthy, likewise. Moreover, he did confess to Aunt Margaret that aforetime he did dream of occupying first place in my affections, but that being a matter the young lady herself had control of, magnanimous, he forbore to press his suit. And, like a brave and honest gentleman, he did ride over to salute us. Our marriage was set for Christmas last past, and

Aunt Margaret, she would have me to Boston immediate on the betrothal, to purchase my gear, but as luck would have it, she was took ill, so 'twas put off.

Mr. Shapleigh, he did come exceeding often to Black Point, and time was running through our glass full swift, when Sorrow brushed me with her black wing, and life was changed. It chanced in this wise. One mellow afternoon in the month of October, I did walk a piece with Nicholas toward the ferry, and returning lone, I strayed through the sequestered wood. Reflective of happy things, I did saunter but slowly, mine eyes upon the ground, when a morsel of writing-paper, most uncommon in that solitary spot, claim-

ed my attention. Curious, I did pick it up. 'Twas assuredly a portion of a love-letter, torn off at the edges and devoid of signature save — "*Your own faithful—*," the name missing. In sympathetic humor, still loitering, I read, "*The tender tie which binds us,*" and, "*Wearying for sight of you,*" and the like. "Was't not the same story ever?" I asked myself, smiling indulgent. Of a sudden I was overtaken by a sense of eavesdropping, and didn't read no more, but folding the sheet in its creases, turned it over. All my bodily forces seemed to fail as I did behold — writ in a timid, unfashioned hand — the superscription: "*Mr. Nicholas Shapleigh, Esq., Piscatqua Plantation, In the Province of Maine.*" 'Twas posted in

England. I marked the colour of the wax, and the faded ink. I noted a stain upon the sheet.

Half spent, I sank down on the trunk of a fallen tree, exceeding thankful to be alone. I won't deny that I'd have died to peruse that letter entire, but that could I not do, in honour. "So," pondered I, "there's a 'faithful' English mayde awaiting her faithless English lover, and I've been her undoing." Could Nicholas Shapleigh be already married? Had I come innocently betwixt man and wife? I turned sick at the thought. I did pity the woman's grief even as 'twere mine own. Long sat I in that friendly shade, affrighted to face the future. Only to God Himself could I turn confi-

dent in my distress, and that did I with comfort, sure of one unchangeable Friend. When I did find my way home, night was falling and in the dusk my comportment passed unchallenged. I had resolved nevermore to behold Nicholas Shapleigh, his face, and too truly did I love him to betray no sign of my bereavement. Nevertheless did I light my betty-lamp and escape to mine own chamber pretty soon after supper.

You'll divine that I slept not, but lay till the dawn like a green log, inanimate and sodden. Soon as I could frame excuse, sought I Aunt Margaret where she was a-sorting of the linen, and did fall at her feet sobbing out my distress. As I foreknew, mighty wroth

was she, charging Mr. Shapleigh with villainy and me with wilfulness. But at the last did she deign to kiss my cheek in token of reconciliation. Thereafter, Uncle Henry, he did grant me use of his inkhorn and pouncet with a sheet bearing the Jocelyn crest. So, sitting at his scrutoire, with mine own quill did I indite an epistle enjoining Mr. Shapleigh not to visit me nevermore, nor never to send me a letter. Ah me! I didn't abase myself to declare just cause, but I did subjoin my guardian's express command agreeable with mine own. I knew none could appeal from that. My Aunt did acquaint Uncle Henry with the matter doubtless, thus he didn't ask no questions and was uncommon kind.

My letter was conveyed forthwith and the messenger charged to deliver it into Mr. Shapleigh's own hand. After 'twas gone I felt like a little star wandered out of its course, nor am I in any degree recovered from my lost estate.

Uncle Henry had a communication from Mr. Shapleigh, immediate, the which (alas!) he did return unopened, and that is all — all.

My tale is done, Sister. Little spirit have I to treat on matters trivial. 'Tis rumored that Mr. Shapleigh, he is going home to England soon, but that is nothing to me — nothing, nothing.

With a heavy heart, but faithful devotion, Your sister and well-wisher,

ALICE JOCELYN.

Letter the Sixth

*BLACK POINT,
The tenth day of January,
A. D. 1649.*

AMIALE SISTER:—

I'm a-dreading lest after the perusal of this missive you'll disown me, root and branch. Overlong have I waited, mayhap, to disburden my minde, lest I be chid, but so extreme discontent am I to hide aught from you, that I'm now come to the pinch.

For a pretty while I've held my peace concerning the gentlemen, whiles in veritie, 'tis but a small modicum of peace that I've been blest with. I shouldn't break silence now, had not occasion arrived when I must choose mine own lot. And that do I, with calmness.

Sister Philippa, I've promised to marry Mr. Edgecombe, and we sha'n't

neither on us repent us of our bargain, I guess. I dursten't assert that my heart is *whole* or that I can give him the affection that he's deserving of. When I did protest as much, he said he had divined the same and would be exceeding obliged for the moiety I had to give. Leastwise I shall endeavour to pay him the duty that I owe. None couldn't do more. Doubtless we shall grow exceeding fond, in time. I purpose to learn him *writing*, and that speedy. Why, he hath good parts and a sound judgment, and if but he was a scholar, he could be a Counsellor of the Province, for 'tis plain he's scarce a sound Royalist. I'm a-knit-ting of a curious purse of beads — with a deal of pains — for to bestow on him. Uncle

and Aunt do profess pleasure, at my choice. But poor old Christopher Page, he did but sigh at the news, since he will have it that I sha'n't marry save it be — my first lover.

Soon as 'tis seasonable warm, I purpose to take boat for Boston town, to buy my wedding raiment. 'Twill be of different complexion from that I once did dream of. More homely stuff, less bravery; more homespun, little silk. 'Tis little worth.

My looking-glass do prevaricate else thy sister is scarce so comely at five and twenty as when a mayde of fifteen she journeyed hither. Now and again a silver hair discovers itself in the brown. Her cheek isn't so red, her figure slighter.

Mr. Edgecombe, he hath the rather bettered than lost in good looks. Brave and discreet and sturdy is he. His head is clear, his heart sweet. I say this many and many a time, to assure myself. When all's over, shall I rest content doubtless, regretting naught. Happy am I, sweet sister. Believe it, O, believe it! and wish me joy!

Your own little ALICE.

Letter the Seventh

*BLACK POINT,
The twentieth day of April,
A. D. 1649.*

BELOVED SISTER:—

Verily this day bringeth bitter news. Alas! alas! the King! Alas, poor distraught England! Of a surety are we fallen on perilous times. None durst exult, save covertly, if he be of the Puritan party; and the Royalists, such as we, be sore distressed. Divers persons do marvel that the King did suffer him to be enmeshed by the snares of his enemies—himself so subtil. 'Tis passing strange moreover, that in all England should be found one to mar the sacred head of the Lord's Anointed.

'Tis said they made a mock of him in his fallen estate. I pray 'twas not so. "*The martyr of the people!*" Did the

King thus nominate himself at the last?

“Nay, the rather dub him their misguided friend,” quoth Uncle Henry. The gentlemen hereabouts be hot against the Regicides and the Parliament. I would that no evil come to any, yet meseems that the foibles and guile of kings might well be reproved, lest worse trouble do come upon us. (Heaven forgive them rash words!) Mr. Edgecombe, he says: “Sith the wicked deed’s done, pray that the King’s accusers do quit themselves like men, “for,” quoth he, “shrewd be the temptations that come to the lowly when he is exalted.”

I’m no prophet, Philippa, if Mr. Oliver Cromwell, Gent., shall not show a haughty front on occasion, for I do

bethink me how 'tis Mistress Mary Cromwell, her father, which doth strive for the chiefest place in the realm. 'Twould be nought to wonder at, even so. Why, whiles we twain — the little mayde and me — we was playfellows together under her Grandmother's roof in Essex — and she the younger, too, — 'twas even Mistress Mary, her will which did obtain, she stamping her pretty foot, most masterful. "Ah, 'tis Oliver, his own child!" Granny would say approving, whereas, the little mayde herself was ever in the wrong and did merit a stringent whipping for her naughtyness. Even so, she was rarely pretty and most engaging.

Some hold to the opinion that Mr. Cromwell doth espy the shadow of a

crown further on. Mr. Edgecombe, he says, "No, Mr. Cromwell does despise a tyrant, howbeit a crown would not ill suit him."

Uncle Henry trusts him for a knave, the which I secretly deny, the rather crediting Mr. Cromwell with the fanatical conceit that he's commissioned of Heaven to overthrow the ungodly and to mete out justice. Did I speak out, I should be censured roundly and styled a Puritan. This house entertains two mindes on the self same things oftentimes, yet both be honest.

'Tis known here that Mr. Ralph Jocelyn, our kinsman, doth hold a chaplain's commission in the Puritan army. Sundry others of our name make bold to take up arms against the King,

excuse being plead that no Jocelyn ever turned his back upon England's foe. Why then, prithee, must a Jocelyn *mayde* serve but to reflect the colour of her kindred? However, 'tis mighty ticklish hereabouts, for every fresh victory over the Royalists doth but whet the teeth of the Puritan allies.

Why, this Province itself hath been in a pretty turmoil, these many years. A party did spring up awhile back, under the headship of one Alexander Rigby of Casco, claiming jurisdiction over the heirs of Sir Ferdinando Gorges. Uncle Henry, he's a staunch Royalist, therefore of the resisting company. Serious trouble was a-brewing when Heaven did mercifully ordain the death of both Rigby and Gorges.

Then 'twas hoped all would be peaceable, but lo and behold ! comes Massachusetts, greedy enough, to swallow up this Province. So did the quarrel wax that both Uncle Henry and Parson Jordan, they was liable to prison or bail. Pray fancy Uncle Henry being dubbed, "Rebel," and, "Hereticall !" Why, no gentleman in the Province doesn't win more distinction for wisdom, agreeableness and honour, than him, nor there isn't one loyaler.

I pray you, Philippa, of your discreetness to give me such special tidings of our poor country as you do deem fit. In every deed, do we commiserate your vexed situation. Yea, oftentimes be we ill at ease touching your bodily safety. I dare guess every-

one distrusteth his neighbour.

All that do dwell in this house salute
you and our aunt, with extreme ten-
derness. Yours to command,

ALICE JOCELYN.

P. S. To Boston go I, this day fort-
night.

Letter the Eighth

*BLACK POINT,
October the Fifth, 1653.*

RESPECTED SISTER: —

Praying of your clemency for my extreme remissness, and hoping that these lines do find you in health, I take my pen in hand.

Well, to Boston went I, as 'twas forecast, to fetch my marriage gear, Uncle Henry conveying me to Richman's Island, whither sailed I in the *Fellowship*. Mistress Tyng, — she that aforetime harbored a homesick mayde, — did greet me right joyfully, her little babe in her arms. She liked the tamboured lace I fetched the child.

Boston surprised me. It hath outgrown its swaddling-clothes and is pushing a chair. Doubtless ere long 'twill stand alone. Half a score of

years hath wrought mighty changes. Monstrous warehouses be builded, and fair dwellings not a few. Some streets are paved with pebble-stones. Side-walks there be where a body may walk cleanly. Two meeting houses is built. The sentry cries no more, "*Nine o' the clock and all's well! Stiff breeze, sou'-sou'east!*" Now, is rung a bell at nine of night, and in mornings at half after four, which is far decenter and politer, I opine.

Mistress Tyng, she could ill spare the time, I shrewdly guessed, but she would have it that she pined to go a-shopping; so we twain set about the business. 'Twas up-hill work for to do, and after one day, Mistress Tyng, she was pretty well spent; so leaving her

to nurse her babe, I set out on the morrow in solitaryness. I confess I wasn't in high feather and was picking my footsteps ruefully, when who should I come face to face with, but good old Christopher Page! 'Tis not impertinent to aver that scarce ever had I happier encounter.

“Why, little Alice!” cried he, catching my two hands in his big rough palms. I laughed, joyously. Speedily did he acquaint me concerning his own affairs. Mighty well put up at the “Ship’s Tavern” was he, and the like. A certain matter, quoth he, had furthered his going to Kittery immediate, and thence came he of free will, to Boston town. Whereupon, he proceeded to relate how he did chance

upon a lady's pretty pocket in the wood at Black Point, and on adventuring within, he did espy a thimble of no great size, a little reel of silver, a flimsy kerchief laced about, and a letter. That letter had he sped to Kittery express to deliver into the hands of its owner — Nicholas Shapleigh.

“O, Master Page!” cried I, in sore distress. “Wherefore did not you give me back mine own little pocket?”

“Your pocket! Was't yours, Alice?” asked he in amaze.

“Had not the kerchief the Jocelyn crest 'broidered in the linen?” quoth I. “O, Master Christopher! How could you treat me so cruel?”

At that the poor body seemed like one stricken. He stared with open

mouth, and eyes a-popping, the whiles stood I, weeping bitter hard in the publick highway. When he did collect his wits, he made answer as if to himself: "Alice's pocket, and her things, they may be, but the letter, — nay, nay, that was Nicholas Shapleigh, his own, writ by his honoured mother afore she died. I did no wrong, I wot, to restore a man's own. Hey, little Alice?"

The next heard I was Uncle Henry a-calling my name. That was many a long day thereafter. When I would fain learn how came I there, none made answer, but sayed 'twas forbid to speak. Soon as 'twas convenient I was fetched home. Mr. Edgecombe, he also did repair thither to convoy me home. The days after I met Christo-

pher Page in Boston street, be as if they were not. Nevertheless a brooding calm hath nested in my heart, and I do thank my Heavenly Father for His sustaining care. Would I could clasp thy dear hand, sister!

I'm forbid to write more. Soon shall I be amended in health, prepared to meet whatever hap falleth to my lot. The motto of our noble house is writ upon my heart: "*Faire mon devoir.*"

Heaven forefend that I prove faithless to the same!

Yours to command,

ALICE JOCELYN.

Letter the Ninth

BLACK POINT,
Christmas Day, 1655.

SWEET SISTER PHILIPPA:

This Christmas day at noontide, Nicholas Shapleigh, he and I was wed. 'Twas such a happy Christmas, as I didn't dream could come to me, so extreme unworthy of God's goodness. Full many a year were we parted, foolishly, wrongly. The fault was mine own. The suffering touched many. Pray chide me not dear Philippa, for a heartless mayde. Nay, I've done no wrong to any, even in thought. Full loyal kept I my promise nor suffered my heart to stray from duty. But O, sister! how it all fell out, I know not. Meseems 'twas thus Heaven willed it.

Mr. Edgecombe, he came not to wish us joy, today, but did send a man-

ful message by good Christopher Page, wherein I was acquit of fault or fickleness. "'Tis a match foreordained of Heaven, therefore 'twill be blest of God," quoth he, declaring he can't grudge one so dear as me to so good a friend as Nicholas. 'Tis my deepest regret—to entail distress on one so kind as him.

Good Mr. Jordan, who was cast into prison for the christening of a babe by the Prayer Book, and hath been but newly set free, did come hither joyously for to marry us out of that same book. Of all the wedding company, Christopher, he was the merriest. He said he'd ever desired a ready minde, but now he did thank Heaven for a slow wit, which he swore was the protector

of the weak, and a balm for all bruises.

Aunt Margaret, she did clasp her precious string of pearls around my neck, wishing them to bring me as good luck as had come to her. Uncle Henry pressed me to his bosom and bade me pluck up heart for a brave lady. Nicholas — *my* Nicholas, looked a prince, with his soldier-mien and the little white lock that doth gleam out of his dark hair just over the brow. That, should I admire rarely, did not I wot the wherefore came it white, alas!

Bitter disappointed I, that Mistress Tyng, her children be down with the small-pox to let her. But her dear epistle hath warmed my heart anew. Mistress Elizabeth Deering did look uncommon pretty. Fain would I have

had Mr. Edgecombe here for to see her, drest so genteel. Elizabeth's politicks moreover be of the same complexion with Mr. Edgecombe, his own, did she but speak her opinion.

Only but the necessity to go hence from Uncle Henry, his roof, doth grieve me. But go shall I, and that with willing minde, for to dwell with Nicholas Shapleigh in Kittery, midway betwixt Boston and Black Point; —nearer to Mistress Tyng, further from them I owe my duty to. Well wot I that God doth care for all His creatures, and shall not I trust Him to fill mine own little place at Black Point?

I did send Mr. Edgecombe the purse I knitted. 'Twas handsome.

Scarce durst I look for your favour on my conduct, sister. 'Tisn't proper, nor can't be extenuate. That I'm aware of, but in excuse plead I, my then youngness and indiscreetness in affairs of love. Surely, I sha'n't be in like strait nevermore, for like reason.

My husband, most agreeable to my family, he doth present his gracious compliments to you in peculiar ; and whilst I live, shall I be as now,

Yours in trust and love,

ALICE SHAPLEIGH.

Post Scriptum. Uncle Henry did give me away. I wore Aunt Margaret, her *first* wedding gown. 'Twas over long, but it served. A. S.

P. S. S. Did not I adventure some

time gone, that Mary Cromwell, her father strove for the mastery? Now, prithee behold him Lord Protector of the Commonwealth — by his own behest!

A. S.



Here endeth MISTRESS ALICE JOCELYN,
HER LETTERS, *as endeavoured by C.*
Emma Cheney: Designs and frontispiece
done special and the whole made into a
book and sold by Langworthy & Swift at
THE HOUSE OF THE BLUE SKY PRESS,
Kenwood, CHICAGO. *Completed in the*
month of March MCMIII. Of this
edition there have been printed Five Hun-
dred copies on paper and Twenty copies on
Japan vellum, of which this is number

— 486,
L.



Oldest Love-Letter in the World.

A love letter 4000 years old has lately been discovered in Chaldaea. The lady to whom it was addressed lived in Sippara, the biblical Sepharvni. Her beloved was a resident of Babylon. 1909

In contrast to the position which women hold at the present day in the Orient, they possessed in antiquity a great degree of freedom. In many respects the oriental woman of antiquity was graced with as much privilege as is the modern European woman. Particularly in Chaldaea she could participate in trade, manipulate her own property, be a witness before court and be the guardian of her own children. Of the position of women in Egypt we know less, but doubtless it was much higher than that of the present Mohammedan women. In one respect, however, it seems that custom has been changed very slightly, for marriage was essentially an affair of trade between the parents of the bridegroom and those of the bride. This is ascertained from the legal code of Hammurabi, king of Babylon, B. C. 2200. The future husband paid the price of the bride and her father provided her dower and trousseau. Under these circumstances there was no such courtship as precedes marriage in accordance with occidental ideas. Still one may believe that many a love letter on papyrus or clay passed secretly between the hands of the bridal pair during the interval of their engagement.

The newly-discovered letter is written in clay and probably dates from 2200 B.C. Though somewhat formal, the reader can feel the tenderness that lies hidden between its lines. It reads:

"To the lady, Kasbuya (little ewe) says Gimil Marduk (the favorite of Morodach) this: May the Sun God of Marduk afford you eternal life. I write wishing that I may know how your health is. Oh, send me a message about it. I live in Babylon and have not seen you, and for this reason I am very anxious. Send me a message that will tell me when you will come to me, so that I may be happy. Come in Marchesvan. May you live long for my sake?"—[Current Literature for September.

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